

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ORDER NO. 1158

IN THE MATTER OF:

Served July 27, 1971

Establishment of Reduced Fares )  
on D. C. Transit System, Inc., )  
for Senior Citizens. )

In Order No. 1129, the Commission directed D. C. Transit System, Inc. (Transit) to institute a Senior Citizen Reduced Fare Experiment commencing on Sunday, May 9, 1971, and continuing thereafter for a ninety (90) day period, subject to further continuation by order of the Commission. The reduced fare consists of a 15 cent reduction on all regular route fares of 40 cents or more for anyone 65 years of age or older during the off-peak hours from 9:30 A. M. to 3:00 P. M., and again from 7:00 P. M. to 3:00 A. M. weekdays (Monday through Friday), and all day Sunday, upon presentation of a special identification card issued by Transit. In addition, certain surveys and counts were ordered and the staff was directed to analyze and evaluate the ridership data after 45 days of experience and report its findings and recommendations to the Commission. Direct expenditures by the company in connection with this experiment, not including reimbursement for any loss of farebox revenue, was authorized from the "Reserve for Commission Ordered Projects" under the terms of Order No. 773.

The staff report concludes that during the initial 45 days of the experiment, the senior citizen reduced fare program has provided significant benefits in the form of increased mobility for the elderly, many of whom are in a low income group. This has been accomplished at a relatively small cost to the company. However, the staff also advises that the initial test period has not been of sufficient length to provide a basis for a full evaluation of the senior citizen reduced fare experiment. Moreover, certain deficiencies have been noted with regard to publicity and

registration which, if corrected, should result in increased usage by senior citizens while revenue losses are decreased or eliminated. Therefore, the staff has recommended that the test period be continued, that a more intensive publicity campaign be undertaken, that additional registration locations be established, and that the staff continue to monitor the progress of the experiment, reporting back to the Commission.

The staff reports that the company has not only provided its full cooperation during the first phase of the experiment, but has agreed to a further period of experimentation.

The staff's recommendations for additional registration centers called for registration at Transit's downtown office and four division offices and at the mobile token selling outlet in addition to the volunteer centers. The use of the four division offices will provide well-located additional registration centers with expanded hours. However, we do not believe that the use of Transit's downtown office as a registration location is practical as that facility is already quite busy with its normal business. Since the mobile token selling outlet is not yet in operation, we will not order its use for registration purposes at this time; however, we do expect that senior citizen registration will be conducted at that facility when it is placed in operation.

As the 180 day experiment draws to a close, we will again expect the staff, with the assistance of data provided by Transit, to report its findings and recommendations.

**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:**

1. That the senior citizen reduced fare experiment on D. C. Transit System, Inc., which commenced on Sunday, May 9, 1971, as a result of Order No. 1129, be continued for an additional ninety (90) consecutive days, for a total of one hundred eighty (180) days, subject to further continuation by order of the Commission.
2. That D. C. Transit System, Inc. undertake a publicity program for the senior citizen reduced fare experiment using signs on the inside and outside of its buses.

3. That the staff attempt to obtain increased publicity for the senior citizen program by such means as newspaper articles, public service announcements on radio and television, and dissemination of information through senior citizens organizations.

4. That D. C. Transit System, Inc. conduct registration of senior citizens at its four division offices during the hours when tokens are sold and scrip is redeemed.

5. That D. C. Transit System, Inc., continue its counting and reporting of senior citizen ridership and make such additional surveys as the staff may require.

6. That after one hundred thirty-five (135) days of experience, the staff shall analyze and evaluate the ridership data and report its findings and recommendations respecting the program to the Commission on or before the one hundred fiftieth (150th) day.

7. That direct expenditures in connection with this experiment may continue to be reimbursed to Transit from the "Reserve for Commission Ordered Projects" under the terms of Order No. 773, after submission to and approval by the Commission. Eligible expenditures may include costs involved in registering persons and issuing special identification cards, the extra costs incurred in analyzing the data, and costs involved in publicity programs. Eligible expenditures shall not include reimbursement for any revenue loss due to reduced fares or diversionary patronage losses.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION:

  
DOUGLAS N. SCHNEIDER, JR.  
Executive Director

HOOVER, Commissioner, not participating.